Part 2

Accommodating Yellowstone Visitors

From Fire to Fun, and Back Again: The Changing Cultural Landscape of Yellowstone's Upper Geyser Basin

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More than geothermal processes have forged Yellowstone's Upper Geyser Basin. A continually changing American culture, the national park idea, and even marketing ploys have also shaped this once wild and remote landscape, located in the park's southwest quadrant and serving as home to Old Faithful Geyser. For my graduate work in the Department of Earth Sciences at Montana State University, I looked at the evolution of this particular landscape in the context of changes in American culture. The purpose of this work was to investigate how humans responded to this landscape through time, as influenced by how the landscape was developed and promoted by park managers and concessioners. The Yellowstone archives at Mammoth Hot Springs provided a wealth of source materials, such as National Park Service correspondence, travel brochures, narratives, maps, and photographs, which aided in documenting the evolution of this unique and much admired landscape.

From the time the first crude wagon road reached its fuming landscape, the Upper Geyser Basin was on its way to becoming a pocket of urbanity. Over time, an estimated 1,000 different human structures (including tent platforms, cabins, privies, stores, and hotels) have appeared—and mostly disappeared—reflecting transformations in the external influences on the basin. As it changed, so did the way its agents promoted it. In turn, the basin's visitors have discovered experiences different from those who came before them to see this steaming landscape that spreads out along the Firehole River.

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Early Years: Marketing Nature's Oddities, 1872–1903

During the park's first three decades, the development of the Upper Geyser Basin's cultural landscape was galvanized by the superintendency of the ambitious Philetus Norris, the introduction of the U.S. Army and its Corps of Engineers to the park, the appropriation of regular—although modest—funds from Congress, and the concessioners who set up shop there.

In the summer of 1878, motivated by the threat of Indian raids similar to those of the previous summer, Superintendent Norris led a crew of men to hastily construct a road leading west and then south out of Mammoth Hot Springs. Norris's road met up with a one-year-old military road from the park's west entrance; from there, he put through a spur to the Upper Geyser Basin. Just 30 days after the road crew left Mammoth, the first vehicle was able to reach the basin's geysers.

The following year, Norris was confident that Indian raids were no longer likely and concentrated on improving the appreciation of and access to the park's natural offerings. At the basin, he established a log cabin to serve as an outpost for the exploration of a route to Yellowstone Lake and to allow observers to remain in the basin for the winter, sketch the thermal features, and obtain valuable information regarding their winter activities. In 1885, a larger cabin was established as a home for the assistant superintendent. A year later, when the army became the official overseer of the park, this cabin became part of its facilities in the basin.

In 1883, concessioners began establishing businesses in the Upper Geyser Basin; like the park administrators, they recognized the basin's scenic value and the visitation it could draw. For them, the basin was financially promising because of the 153 miles of road that by 1881 connected the Upper Geyser Basin not only to Mammoth Hot Springs and the park's west entrance, but also to Tower Junction, Yellowstone Lake, and Yellowstone Falls. These entrepreneurs, working under the approval of the Department of the Interior (though sometimes violating federal restrictions) established two tent camps, a hotel/lunch station, a Haynes photo shop, and a general store near the basin's thermal cones by 1903.

Recognizing the potential impact on the landscape, Congress passed the Sundry Civil Bill of 1883, which prohibited concessioners from locating facilities within one-quarter mile of any geyser in the park. This limitation was not intended to protect the park's physical landscape from human impact, but to prevent concessioners from monopolizing the visual landscape of the park's wondrous features (i.e., blocking the view of Old Faithful as well as other geysers). However, the law was not fully enforced. The Yellowstone Park Improvement Company trespassed beyond the quarter-mile limit in 1885 by establishing a hotel near Old Faithful Geyser. Because of protests by the Department of the Interior, which realized that the location was the only suitable one for a hotel of that size in the basin, in 1894 the law was superseded by the Hayes Act, which decreased the limit to one-eighth of a mile.

Known as "the Shack," the hotel became notorious for its poor accommodations, and complaints brought about its closing to overnight guests during the 1893 season. It remained open for lunch and, after it burned down in 1894, was replaced by a similar facility, but the Upper Geyser Basin had no lodging facilities until tents were

The Shack Hotel, a predecessor of the Old Faithful Inn, 1889. NPS photo.

established in 1900 or 1901 (the records are unclear).

Between 1872 and 1903 the basin's boiling and steaming features were the only selling points to entice visitors, with the concessioners taking care to publicize their proximity to these fantastic features. When a 1903 Shaw and Powell Camping Company brochure touted the Upper Geyser Basin as "the most interesting geyser formation in the park," it explained that visitors could "camp for the night within sight of Old Faithful Geyser." The Wylie Camping Company facility, according to its brochure, was in a grove next to "Riverside and Giant Geysers."

Concessioners promoted the basin as a unique thermal landscape that would provide an experience never before encountered, and they used the advantageous location of their facilities to attract visitors. Northern Pacific Railroad literature of 1888 bragged that "after a little time spent in this basin, the visitor is almost certain to conclude that he has at length reached the climax of the wonders of the park." A Yellowstone Park Association brochure circa 1902 reported that "Old Faithful is the star feature, not only of the Upper Basin, but of the Yellowstone Park."

The purpose of a visit to the Upper Geyser Basin was to experience its erupting geysers, steaming pools, and bubbling hot pots. The visitors, however, did more than sightsee; as mentioned in journal and diary entries, they used the thermal features of the Upper Geyser Basin to wash their clothes and boil eggs and potatoes. Many also took to scrawling their signatures in the soft silicate formations of the geyser cones. In 1887, author Owen Wister reported that one could see "the names of asses…written in pencil" on Old Faithful's cone. With no other diversions offered, many visitors entertained themselves by throwing umbrellas and the like into geysers to watch them hurl out with the next eruption. More than one curious visitor was burned by peering into the geyser cones.

The visitors' main purpose for venturing into the Upper Geyser Basin was to enter a thermal landscape that they could interact with and be amused by. During the early twentieth century, however, attitudes regarding how the geyser basin should

be enjoyed underwent a major shift that both affected and was affected by changes to the landscape itself.

Creating a Landscape of Nonthermal Curiosities, 1904–1940

The Upper Geyser Basin became a landscape of curiosities in addition to those offered by its natural features. Most notable of the human constructs is the Old Faithful Inn, which opened to guests in 1904 at the site of the former Shack Hotel. Like its geyser namesake, it soon became an obligatory stop for many a visitor to the park, whether or not they intended to stay there overnight.

Incorporating rustic construction materials from local sources, it was architect Robert Reamer's attempt to create a grand overnight facility that harmonized with the surrounding landscape. In addition to modern conveniences such as electric lights and baths, it offered interior balconies with gnarled, knotted, wooden railings surrounding an 85-foot-high lobby, a 14-square-foot chimney, and a wrought-iron clock with a 20-foot-long pendulum. The inn's popularity grew so rapidly that in 1913 the original 140 guest rooms were augmented by an east wing that added more than 100 rooms. In 1927, the addition of a west wing expanded the inn by more than 150 rooms.

Most of the other landscape alterations that occurred in the basin during this period came after the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, and many were a direct result of the belief (as set forth in the legislation that established the park service) that public lands should have a dual purpose of preservation and use. To gain support for the national parks, early park service managers sought to increase the parks' usability and cater to as many types of visitors as possible through improvements in interpretive and concessioner facilities. To foster appreciation and preservation of the natural features, the park service employed rangers to interpret the parks' landscapes for visitors as well as to enforce laws protecting them.

However, visitor use was often at odds with protection, as in the debate that began in 1911 over whether to restrict visitors to traveling in Yellowstone only by horse. In 1915 the Department of the Interior settled the matter by deciding to permit the use of a new transportation convenience, the automobile. This soon increased access to the park, and thereby its use and abuse. Annual visitation to the park nearly tripled during the next decade, from about 52,000 in 1915 to 154,000 in 1925.

Since the Upper Geyser Basin was the most highly visited area of Yellowstone, both the park service and concessioners built numerous interpretive and comfort facilities there to cater to the increased visitation. By 1932, the landscape near the geyser cones sported a museum, an amphitheater, interpretive signs, two gas stations, two Hamilton stores, a Haynes photo shop, and a large campground.

Two groups of Yellowstone Park Camps Company cabins, which numbered approximately 400 by 1940, contributed heavily to the cluttered feeling of the landscape. One cluster was located just east of Old Faithful Geyser behind the Old Faithful Lodge (completed in 1928 on the former site of the Shaw and Powell Camping Company office and dining room), and the other was south of the geyser

The first cars arrive at Old Faithful Wylie Camp, 1915. NPS photo.

behind the Yellowstone Park Lodge and Camps Company's cafeteria (built in 1927), and the Hamilton Store (completed in 1930). These rustic one- to four-room cabins on narrow lanes created a small, albeit strange-looking town.

When advertising its offerings, the Yellowstone Park Hotel Company (successor to the Yellowstone Park Association in controlling the hotel concession) vaunted not only the creature comforts of its human facilities, but also those of the basin's bear-feeding ground, which was established in 1919. One of many such attractions in the park during this period, the basin's bear-feeding ground was located behind the automobile camp and housekeeping cabin area, less than one-half mile from the Old Faithful Inn. A hotel company brochure from circa 1920 stated that visitors could "photograph a wild bear and eat a course dinner in the same hour."

The bear-feeding ground consisted of a wire barricade strung between trees and posts, wooden benches for the human visitors, a shallow ditch "to keep people from going beyond the danger line," and an armed ranger in case things got out of hand. At a feeding platform on which the bears could dine, the sign read, "LUNCH COUNTER FOR BEARS ONLY." While visitors watched the bears eat, interpretive rangers lectured about bear behavior and natural history. Because of the number of bears and the lectures, the park's bear-feeding areas became "one of the most interesting features of the park to the majority of tourists," according to Superintendent Horace Albright's 1919 annual report.

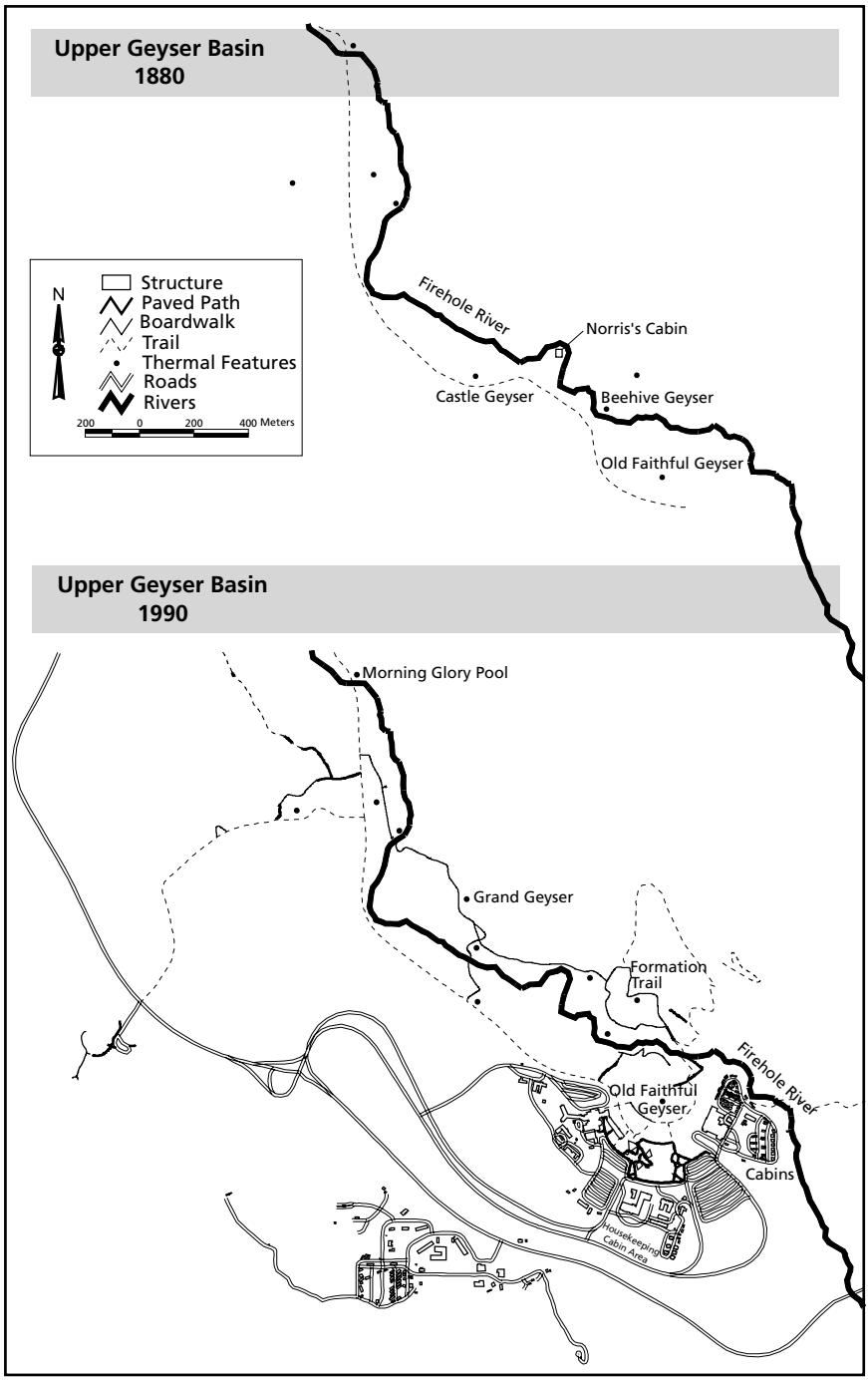
In 1936, however, the bear-feeding grounds were closed except for the one at Otter Creek. The park service had determined that the grounds—which were, in actuality, dumps—not only produced bad odors, but also encouraged bears to roam around visitors, employees, and facilities. (The first recorded basin visitor death at the paws of a bear did not occur until 1942. However, while the basin's feeding area was still in operation, two black bears chased each other through the wire barricade and the seating area, posing a threat to a crowd of spectators.)

Above: Ranger Philip Martindale giving an interpretive bear lecture on horseback in 1931. The lunch counter was closed in 1936 due to public and bear health and safety concerns.

A closeup of the "lunch counter" in 1923. NPS photos.

The *Haynes Guides* during this period increasingly promoted the basin's cultural landscape. They displayed photographs of the facilities and visitors enjoying their amenities by engaging in recreational activities such as swimming, dancing, and horseback riding. The guides' map of the basin showed human features such as the Old Faithful Inn and the Old Faithful Lodge alongside the more prominent thermal features. The *Haynes Guides* were also the first to describe the basin's human and natural features in terms of distances on an automobile odometer, giving visitors an almost foot-by-foot estimate of how far they were from the next feature of interest.

The transformation of the basin's cultural landscape during this time created a marked change in the typical visitor experience. Instead of being drawn to this area of Yellowstone only for the peculiarity of its natural wonders, visitors now sought out a recreational experience complete with dance halls, horseback riding, scheduled bear feedings, and geyser baths. The latter amenity was fed by runoff from nearby thermal springs. Established by Henry Brothers in 1914, this bathing facility began as a 5,000-square-foot plunge. In 1933 Charles A. Hamilton (owner of the park's Hamilton stores) bought Brothers' bathhouse and radically remodeled the structure by converting it into an enormous log building with a stone base. Within this facility was a 25-foot-tall lifeguard tower with a rope swing for rescuing swimmers (there would be three drownings here) and a skylight constructed from two-inch-thick



A map of the Upper Geyser Basin, 1880 and 1990. Maps courtesy of Yellowstone's Spatial Analysis Center.

glass. This facility remained part of the basin's landscape until 1950, when it was closed for public health reasons.

Because of the National Park Service's philosophy of use between 1916 and 1940, the basin's human and natural worlds became increasingly separated. While in the Upper Geyser Basin, visitors may no longer have felt that they were in the "wilderness," but in a resort town that happened to lie within a national park.

Promoting Visual Consumption, 1941–1990

The Upper Geyser Basin's facilities, like those in many parks, fell into disrepair during World War II because of a reduction in funding and staffing. After the war, park roads and structures were strained by a deluge of travelers who were eager to shake off the fear, suffering, and restrictions that war had brought by heading out to enjoy America's scenic wonders. Although Yellowstone had heretofore been visited by persons of all classes (albeit those of the poorer and working classes tended to come from nearby states), the park began experiencing, along with the rest of the nation, a boom in the size and influence of the middle class; these visitors were increasingly mobile and ready to spend their newfound disposable income.

The National Park Service launched Mission 66 as a 10-year program to bring the parks up to par by its fiftieth anniversary in 1966. The goal was to both accommodate the increased visitation and reduce its impact by adding and improving roads and overnight facilities, eliminating camping in high-impact areas, encouraging the use of the park's backcountry, and offering educational programs about bears. The Upper Geyser Basin, however, was not affected by Mission 66 until the late 1960s. This lag reflected the basin's cultural history and the park service's belief that much of the development in the Upper Geyser Basin encroached on a sensitive thermal area. To correct past development and lessen the impact of increased visitation to the basin, the park service drastically reduced the number of structures, redirected automobile traffic via the development of a cloverleaf bypass, and constructed an intricate system of trails and boardwalks that would direct human movement.

By providing mostly self-guided interpretation explaining these changes, the park service hoped to engender a greater appreciation of the basin as a place to visually consume the landscape's wonders, not to disport as if at a resort, zoo, or amusement park. As such, the basin's physical and interpretive landscapes changed to reflect this goal, as did the promotional literature of the time. To spread out visitation so as to reduce its impact, and perhaps to fill up visitors' time that was once spent soaking in the geyser baths or watching bears being fed, park service literature highlighted not only Old Faithful Geyser and the Upper Geyser Basin's trails, but also promoted other nearby trails and thermal features.

Keying in on this trend, concessioners also began to promote the basin as a wild landscape. In addition to photographs of its facilities, a 1972 Yellowstone Park Company brochure depicted images of wildlife with text explaining the importance of not approaching or feeding wild animals. Another brochure described the Upper Geyser Basin not as a resort, but as a "rustic village [that had] sprouted in the wilderness surrounding Old Faithful Geyser." Even the Haynes Guides reduced the

depiction of visitors engaged in diversionary activities in the basin's facilities. For example, the guides had no photographs of visitors riding horseback or swimming in the geyser baths from 1940 to 1972. The removal of the pool in 1951 accounts for the lack of photos of swimmers after that year, but throughout this period visitors could rent saddle horses in the basin. The lack of such pictorial promotion seems to reflect the new emphasis on visitors having more of a sightseeing experience, and less of a resort one.

Although the park service's and concessioners' efforts improved the appreciation and preservation of the Upper Geyser Basin's thermal landscape, they also to some degree kept the visitor experience a homogenized one. Visitors all left their vehicles in the same consolidated parking lot, walked the same trail to the visitor center, and saw the same interpretive film. They read the same interpretive pamphlet, and most flocked in one direction around the geyser basin, with only a few choosing to gander in a circuit opposite the crowds.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the promotion of the wild aspect of this landscape increased as a result of changes in park service philosophy, management, and funding. Groups that during the 1960s amid environmental circles had championed the belief that park development and preservation were incompatible found an ear with the Ford and Carter administrations, who directed the parks toward a philosophy of less development. The establishment of the Office of Management and Budget in July 1970 reinforced this philosophy when it took control of, and subsequently reduced funding for park development.

The impact of these events at the national level became visible on the Upper Geyser Basin's landscape. Yellowstone's administrators attempted to reshape the park to fit this increasingly environmental philosophy through the park's 1973 *Master Plan* and the 1984 *Old Faithful Development Concept Plan*, which called for making facilities adjacent to the basin for day use only. By leaving specific areas untouched by human development, such as the basin's thermal features, winter wildlife habitat, and the Firehole River, the park sought to continue to reduce the congestion and physical/visual impact on the basin's landscape while considering the value of the basin's cultural resources. Buildings such as the Old Faithful Inn and the Old Faithful Lodge, which were on or proposed for the National Register of Historic Places, were valued for their unique architectural and historical significance, but more than half of the camper cabins (some 155 in all) were eliminated in the 1980s. Almost all of the new development between 1973 and 1990, such as employee housing and maintenance buildings, took place away from the geyser cones in the utility area, hidden from the visitors' view.

As intended, these landscape changes affected visitor experiences. The thermal features continued to be promoted, but now there was a stronger emphasis on the basin's other natural aspects. For example, a 1973 Yellowstone Park Company brochure urged the visitor to "look for wildlife" while walking along the basin's boardwalk, and a 1983 brochure by the hotel concessioner, Trans World Association, advertised that "elk and bison wander through the geyser area, enchanting photographers."

With the addition of interpretive ecology walks and visitor center displays revealing the damage that humans had caused to the basin's thermal features in the

past, the park service attempted to teach visitors the value of the basin as a natural landscape where they could have a fulfilling visit without engaging in diversionary pastimes that stand apart from observing the geyser basin, i.e., dancing or swimming. Instead, recreations such as geyser gazing, photography, and bird watching were encouraged. The result was a return to activities more akin to those enjoyed by many of the park's first visitors, but without the previous destructive interactions with the geysers like washing clothes and inscribing names.

Welcoming Visitors to Yellowstone's "Warm Winter Heart," 1973–1990

When the Snow Lodge was built in 1972, it contributed to a whole new visitor experience by providing a comfortable base from which to observe the basin's thermal features during the winter. With its addition, the park service hoped to reduce some of the impact of visitation by spreading it out over four seasons.

The park service and concessioners promoted this visitor experience somewhat differently than that of the summer, calling the basin "the warm winter heart" of Yellowstone. Here visitors could have an enjoyable day viewing the thermal features and wildlife via snowshoes, cross-country skis, or snowmobiles; afterward, they could relax in the warm environs of the Snow Lodge. A 1975 Yellowstone Park Company brochure lured visitors by saying "a friendly fireplace invites you, your family, and friends to drop worldly cares." A 1980 Trans World Association brochure reported that "a crackling fire beckons you to relax with family and friends while you relive a day of fun in the snow."

Overall, the park service and concessioners promoted the Upper Geyser Basin's wintertime landscape as a place where visitors could engage in simple pleasures of the natural world, participating in an experience that reflected the park values of the period. The promotion of the park's wintertime landscape was so successful that winter visitation increased from more than 69,000 during the 1974–75 season to more than 118,000 during the 1989–90 season.

Seeking to Protect a Sensitive Ecosystem

Once sought only during Yellowstone's brief summer for its "fire"—that of an extraordinary thermal landscape—the Upper Geyser Basin became known for a variety of recreational activities provided by the park and its concessioners, and later because of its connections to a feral terrain. Then during the early 1970s, the Upper Geyser Basin opened to winter visitors, offering a new season for remarkable experiences. Park managers began promoting a visitor experience that was again focused on the thermal environment of this landscape, but which also advocated sensitivity for its ecology. Today's visitors are apt to learn how the basin's hot pools are home to resilient microorganisms whose applications in medicine and technology are under investigation; one such life form has proven essential for unlocking the mysteries of DNA.

Many people have worked to achieve ecosystem protection and enhancement in

Yellowstone's "Warm Winter Heart" at Old Faithful, 1991. NPS photo.

the Greater Yellowstone Area, hoping to safeguard the Upper Geyser Basin's fragile landscape from visitors and impacts other than boardwalks, guardrails, and warning signs. For example, federal legislation introduced in 1991 sought to limit parties from tapping into underground thermal reservoirs that lie outside the park. Although the only known reservoirs were well to the west or north of the Upper Geyser Basin, the bill was entitled the Old Faithful Protection Act—exemplifying how this icon has become the centerpiece of a landscape that endures both thermal outbursts and the consequences of being loved, even revered, by humans.

Although the act did not pass, the park service has continued limiting development within the boundaries of the Upper Geyser Basin. Two new buildings have been constructed in the basin (a new ranger station in 1996 and a new Snow Lodge in 1998), but they were intended to consolidate some of the existing park service and concessioner facilities. Moreover, park administrators sought to provide both buildings with an architectural style more in harmony with the surrounding natural landscape than those constructed in the basin during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The 300 visitors who came to the park in 1872 had a multi-day trek on foot or by horse and wagon to get to the Upper Geyser Basin from Mammoth Hot Springs, but those who visit today need only drive a few hours. Accessible to even the largest of recreational vehicles, the basin has become the most visited destination in Yellowstone. Each year, millions of people from around the world arrive to stride on its boardwalks, gawk at its thermal splendors, scrutinize the vista for any signs of wildlife, and peruse its shops for souvenirs. Moreover, technology is making it possible for more people to view the Upper Geyser Basin's wonders without ever entering Yellowstone. IMAX theater presentations called "Yellowstone" and "Grizzlies, Geysers, and Grandeur" have played as far away as Washington, D.C. Will these six-story-high shows become an established, customary way for people to experience Yellowstone? Or will they motivate viewers to become real-life visitors?

The Upper Geyser Basin has served in several roles: geologic wonder, tourist attraction, the heart of Yellowstone, a sacred hallmark of America, and pitstop. If

the past serves as an accurate predictor, we should expect the future to bring more changes to the cultural landscape of the Upper Geyser Basin. How these alterations affect the physical environment and our perspective of it remains to be seen, but their evolution should provide interesting material for future geographical study.

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The Heart of the Park: The Historical Archeology of Tourism in the Lower Geyser Basin, 1872–1917

William J. Hunt, Jr.

Abstract

Touring and tourism evolved rapidly after the establishment of Yellowstone National Park. At the onset, tourists were largely on their own, moving through the park in small groups over crude trails and roads. This "rough and ready" tourism changed rapidly, however, with changes in the infrastructure supporting the tour business. Major alterations in the touring fabric included establishment of small, crude hotels in the early 1880s, construction and maintenance of roads, and establishment of transportation services. Throughout this early period, touring was largely restricted to those living in the region or wealthy individuals from "the East" or "the Continent." The arrival of the railroad opened Yellowstone National Park to a mass audience and made the park available to a much broader range of tourists. By the 1890s, the tourist industry had become a big, multifaceted business providing a variety of services to specialized audiences. Lodging services, for instance, ranged from permanent camps with bare amenities to luxury hotels with hot and cold running water, electricity, and a variety of exotic entertainment. Throughout this era, the Lower Geyser Basin played a central role in the experience of the tourist. This is reflected in a number of historical archeological sites scattered along the length of the basin reflecting the evolution of the tourist business. These sites include a tourist town, humble and grandiose hotels, permanent camps, a range of roads and creek fords, as well the military sites reflecting the park's early administrative history. The central role played by the basin was shattered in 1915 when the newly formed National Park Service allowed automobile travel in the park. The independence and faster speed of travel afforded by the automobile transformed Yellowstone touring once more. The most pronounced result was the almost immediate abandonment of tourist service facilities in the Lower Geyser Basin. By 1927, virtually all traces of the prominent and flourishing tourist businesses that had once existed had been eradicated. All that remains today, are archeological sites; humble and ghostly reflections of Yellowstone's early touring grandeur.

Introduction

In its early years, Yellowstone was a remote wilderness visited by only tens or hundreds per year. During this period, Yellowstone tourists traveled a roadless

expanse in search of an intimate and unblemished commune with nature. Within two decades, though, that park experience was transformed. Tall stages traversed crude and dusty roads, introducing thousands of tourists each year to an area so fantastic it became generally known as "Wonderland." Now, 125 years since its creation, Yellowstone is a world-class tourist Mecca with a *daily* crush of tens of thousands and an annual visitation in the millions.

As the park passed through these transformations, its attractions and tourist routes witnessed equally dramatic changes. Mammoth Hot Springs, Upper Geyser Basin, Yellowstone Lake, and Grand Canyon have always been focal points. For the first fifty years of the park's existence, however, the Lower Geyser Basin (Figure 1) was of similar or perhaps even of greater importance. This broad valley of meadows, streams, and scattered hot springs is largely bypassed by the modern tourist. Nevertheless, it once stood at the heart of the Yellowstone touring experience anchoring one end of the only easy route between the geyser fields on the west side of the park to the spectacular vistas of the Lake and Canyon areas to the east. Further, limitations of horse-powered transportation as well as the basin's abundant grass and water made it an excellent tourist stopping point. As a result, the Lower Geyser Basin became the first area deep inside the park to experience commercial development.

Figure 1. Location of the Lower Geyser Basin in Yellowstone National Park.

By the mid-1880s, it was a focal point of virtually every tourist's park experience. Its significance was somewhat diminished in 1891 with construction of a road from the Upper Geyser Basin to Yellowstone Lake. It wasn't until 1915, however, that the basin lost its status entirely as a tourist center. That year, automobiles were allowed in the park. Autos dramatically shortened travel time between tour focal points. Simultaneously, the newly created National Park Service consolidated Yellowstone's concession businesses. The competing Upper Geyser Basin's tourist facilities were given priority. Concessions in the Lower Geyser Basin were abandoned and torn down, their locations quickly passing into obscurity.

Identifying Historic Site Significance

From our vantage point at the end of the twentieth century, it might seem that all that remains of Yellowstone's early historic era are the few memories of tourists and officials preserved in scattered archives as photographs, journals, and business records. However, the land itself remembers those past events, its memory taking the form of artificial changes to the countryside. The evolution of Yellowstone tourism is reflected in the park's landscape—shallow ruts or gaps in the trees indicate former routes of timeworn pack trails and wagon roads; scatters of cans and bottles identify sites of bygone camp grounds; vague depressions expose locations of long gone and forgotten buildings. In essence, we are talking about the "right stuff" for an historical archeologist like myself.

Unfortunately, the importance of historical archeological resources in Yellowstone is often unrecognized. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, a major contributor to this problem has been the archeological community itself. Archeologists have generally been unable to identify and cogently explain the significance of Yellowstone's sites in terms that non-archeologists can appreciate. This is particularly true of the park's many historic dumps, a type of site which is often visually displeasing but contains an incredible amount of information about previous park occupants (Hunt 1994a, 1994b:25).

Of course, assessment of site significance is based upon recognition of an appropriate historic context within which the site's existence and function can be interpreted. Until recently, historical archeologists have struggled to find an appropriate context to apply to Yellowstone's sites. The reasons for this are complex but figuring prominently in the problem are the relatively immense scale of the study area (3,472 square miles) coupled with an extremely diverse archeological record. This has been compounded by projects which have typically been of extremely short duration, have small budgets, and are narrow in scope. As a result, Yellowstone has been subjected to a constantly changing field of investigators who have had little time to become familiar with the park and regional history.

With the advent of the Federal Lands Highway Program in the late 1980s, this situation improved. The program's goal has been to repair, upgrade, and reconstruct Yellowstone's 329 miles of damaged highways over the next 20 years. The planning process is complex, however, with the process involving a plethora of federal, state, and local agencies. The bureaucratic complexity of the project spawned concern for

communication gaps and that the confusion resulting from poor communication could impede or obstruct the highway program's cultural resource planning process.

To reduce that possibility, the National Park Service, the State Historic Preservation Offices of Wyoming and Montana, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation signed a programmatic agreement outlining the responsibilities of each agency in that process (National Park Service 1993). Yellowstone National Park was obliged to develop an archeological treatment plan. The Midwest Archeological Center assisted the park in accomplishing this task.

The treatment plan (Hunt 1993a) addresses historical archeological sites from the perspective of an historic context which is not only elemental to the national park system but also has potential for broad application outside the system. The context is actually identified in Yellowstone National Park's 1872 enabling legislation; that is, as "a public park or pleasureing-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people" (National Park Service 1933). In essence, Yellowstone is directly tied to a cultural phenomenon known as "tourism." Consequently, most historic sites within and near the boundaries of the park can be studied, assessed, and interpreted from the context of tourism.

Although unprecedented as a subject of historical archeological inquiry, tourism has been a topic of anthropological inquiry for more than thirty years and its appeal to the discipline is both basic and quite natural (Bodine 1981, Crick 1989, Nash 1981). It has been suggested that tourism represents the single largest movement of human populations outside wartime and is therefore a powerful force for culture contact and change (Crick 1989:309–310). Further, the form and goals of tourism are not only culturally determined but they also shift through time and from one culture to the next (Graburn 1989:28). As archeology has directed the greater portion of its research toward issues of culture change, tourism would seem a natural and entirely valid subject for archeological inquiry.

Tourism Model

THE MODEL OF TOURISM developed for Yellowstone draws upon the unique history of the national park while borrowing heavily from concepts and terminology in the anthropological literature. It also uses a broad definition of tourism in order to maximize its applicability to the greatest number of sites. In essence, tourism is considered that activity characterized by travel, conspicuous consumption, and pursuit of other than normal (secular) activities (Graburn 1989, Robinson 1979, Smith 1981, Turner and Turner 1978).

Economically, tourism can be characterized as marginal, extremely dynamic, and multidimensional. It is marginal in that it is a service industry with no tangible product to export; its work force is largely engaged in tertiary occupations like catering, travel agencies, and so on; and it is often characterized by seasonal unemployment and minimal wages. Tourism is dynamic because it is basically an enterprise governed by fashion. As a result, tourist businesses must be able to adjust quickly to new conditions in order to survive over the long term. Finally, tourism is multidimensional in that it is composed of many spatially separate but nevertheless

interdependent elements such as airlines, hotel, restaurants, tour operators, etc. The economic performance of these elements may be quite different from one another with any weak link in the system adversely affecting the otherwise economically healthy elements (Crick 1989:334; Robinson 1979:xxxi, 40).

The structural composition of tourism may be of particular interest to archeologists because tourist activity is reflected in the physical environment via historical sites. This physical environment is composed of at least three interacting sectors; the tourist, the external facilitator, and the internal facilitator (Crick 1989; Nash 1981; Robinson 1989).

The most critical sector of the three is obviously the *tourist*. Tourist behavior can be seen as cyclic with individuals moving physically and ideologically from the "ordinary" to the "extraordinary" and back again. This process brings the tourist in contact with structures established expressly to facilitate their movement through this cycle.

The tourist is a natural focal point for Yellowstone as the park would certainly not exist without them. Tourists affect the park in a variety of ways. Their attitudes and perceptions can affect the form and roles of park management directly via comments and complaints to the management as well as more subtly through the political process. Tourists more directly influence the park's tour infrastructures. The form and strength of that influence varies according to each tourist population's mix of economic status, age and sex composition, and availability of leisure time. These variables, for example, restrict and define locations visited, season of tour, length of stay, and range of tourist expectations. These factors in turn influence the quality and types of tourist support facilities and entertainment available.

Historically, tourist populations at Yellowstone have changed dramatically, often within a very short time frame (see Haines 1977). For the first decade or so after the park was created, primitive transportation and support facilities operated to restrict the tourist population largely to people living near the park and a few very rich from the East and the Continent. Travel assistance was uniformly absent, each group having to be self-sufficient throughout their tour; i.e., there were no restaurants, hotels, or transportation services. After the late 1870s, transportation routes constructed to and through the park provided ever greater access to Yellowstone. This increase in access escalated the number of tourists visiting from distant areas. Socioeconomic conditions of the time were such that the composition of this population was largely restricted to the upper middle and upper classes. Consequently, tourist accommodations improved rapidly with the addition of several luxury hotels to meet the expectations of that group.

By the 1890s, transportation and socioeconomic improvements brought greater numbers of the middle class to Yellowstone. This was paralleled by the introduction of lower priced lodges and permanent camps with the mix of accommodations. The introduction of the automobile to Yellowstone in 1915 completed the process of democratizing Yellowstone touring. The touring population quickly came to be dominated by the working and middle classes and free automobile camps were introduced to the park to meet that group's lodging needs. Tourist support facilities became more democratic as a result providing a diversity of hotels, restaurants,

campgrounds, and activities suitable to every sector of the tourist populace (Graburn 1989:30–31; Haines 1977:Chapter 22; Robinson 1979:19–20). Immediately after World War II, the transformation of park tourism had been completed. The railroads dropped out of the tourist transportation business and the large hoteliers were reduced to lesser roles in the overall range of tourist support facilities.

These changes in tourist demography should be evidenced in Yellowstone's archeological record as:

a. fluctuations in the ratios of various kinds of lodging ranging from informal and formal campsites to luxury hotels;
b. variations in accommodation formality and site plan; and
c. changes in quantity and diversity of foodstuffs and products available to the tourist as demonstrated by artifacts deposited in occupational sites and associated refuse areas.

A second sector in the structure of tourism, the *external facilitator sector*, is composed of agencies outside the tour center. These agencies identify and promote the center as a place to visit, provide support and supply services to tourists while in route to and from the center, and provide the materials necessary for the operation of internal facilitators (see below). Examples of external facilitators include tour agencies, railroads, hotels, stage and bus lines, restaurants, etc. Elements of this sector can only be indirectly represented archeologically at Yellowstone as its components exist by definition outside park boundaries. Nevertheless, many organizations and their influence will be represented in the variety and volume of materials delivered to the park and ultimately deposited in the living areas and park dumps.

The third sector of tourism, and the one most evident in the archeological record, is the *internal facilitator*. This sector incorporates organizations providing physical support and services to the tourist within a tour center. At Yellowstone, the sector includes elements of park management, support and supply, and transportation, all of which are directly represented in the park's historic sites and overlap to a considerable degree in function.

Park management at Yellowstone has a number of basic responsibilities which it must fulfill. Primary among these are: (a) the construction and maintenance of internal access routes (roads and trails); (b) park protection and law enforcement; and (c) regulation of concessions. Since the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916, management has also been responsible for (d) interpretation and (e) providing camping facilities. At Yellowstone, sites associated with management are related to the military, fish hatcheries, museums and road side kiosks, poacher's cabins, automobile camps, and so on.

The second element of the internal facilitator sector, internal transportation, is intimately connected to the park management, the creators of transportation routes. It is equally connected to the internal support and supply businesses which own vehicles and promote transportation through the park. This element is of extreme importance for the mode of transportation controls the scale and character of tourism at Yellowstone (see Culpin 1994:Chapters I-VII; Haines 1977:Chapters 9 and 17).

Internal transportation is composed of two technological entities, routes and vehicles. These entities determine the length, location, and form of individual

routes; type of conveyance; rapidity of movement; and degree of access to the park's attractions. In addition, the internal transportation element is the primary entity influencing the number and location of tourist accommodations and other support facilities in the park. Sites at Yellowstone associated with internal transportation include road camps, garbage dumps, wagon roads, automobile roads, boat docks, equestrian and pedestrian trails, bridges, quarries, stage stations, barns and corrals, storage structures, water tanks, blacksmith shops, gasoline stations, and so on.

Internal support and supply, the third internal facilitator sector element, is the purview of the park concessionaire. This element is highly dependent upon and constrained by all of the other sectors and sector elements. For example, concessionaires require governmental approval and licensing to operate in the park. They are also dependent upon park management to identify and make accessible those attractions which draw the public to the vacation area. The companies must then provide support facilities for the tourist. Support facilities are necessarily founded on at least two additional factors which are at least in part beyond the control of the concessionaires; i.e., the internal transportation system and the types of facilities expected by tourists. The type of internal transportation available restricts the concessionaire's choices with regard to location of hotels, luncheon facilities, stores, etc. We have already noted that the range of facilities and services offered to the touring public varies according to that population's demographic mix. Finally, the successful concessions entity must also be able to recognize and address the changing demands of tourists by closely following the fashion trends of the industry and making appropriate changes in the tourist support facilities. Sites at Yellowstone National Park most directly related to the internal facilitator sector are hotels of various kinds, tent camps, dams and water rams, garbage dumps, storage buildings, restaurants, bathhouses, employee housing, stores, logging camps, etc.

Tourism Archeology in the Lower Geyser Basin

Recently, an opportunity arose for an archeological investigation of historic tourist sites in the "heart of the park," the Lower Geyser Basin. This came as a by-product of Yellowstone's program to repair and rebuild its deteriorated road system. Park managers knew construction could impact irreplaceable archeological resources in or next to the roads' right-of-way. Until our fieldwork, however, there was little information available to help managers identify and protect significant resources through the construction.

From 1992 through 1995, small teams of archeologists from the National Park Service's Midwest Archeological Center (MWAC) examined the periphery of the Grand Loop Road from Madison Junction to Biscuit Basin (Figure 2). The objectives were to (a) locate and document all archeological sites within proposed construction corridor alternatives and former quarry areas along the routes which might be reopened for construction fill; (b) determine the sites' cultural and temporal affiliations; and finally, (c) determine the significance of each site with respect to park and regional history (Hartley et al. 1993; Hunt 1993b). Ultimately, thirty new archeological sites were recorded. Among other things, much new information

Figure 2. Midwest Archeological Center survey team, on Fountain Flat, Lower Geyser Basin, in 1993 (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

was acquired in the process about Yellowstone National Park history and the Lower Geyser Basin's important role in park tourism.

At least twelve sites in the Lower Geyser Basin relate most directly to Yellowstone's tourism history (Hunt 1997). These include six historic roads, three hotel complexes, a bathhouse, an early historic camp, and a permanent camp. Four military sites associated with park management are also known but will not be discussed here.

Highways and Byways

ROADS, THEIR QUALITY AND ROUTES, CHANNEL THE TOURISTS through the park and provide access to its myriad wonders. In many ways, the history of Yellowstone National Park's first decades is basically a history of road construction.

Elements of six historic roads have been identified in the Lower Geyser Basin by the MWAC team and others which span the gamut from early horse and wagon travel to the onset of automobile transport. One of the very earliest roads into the park was the Virginia City and National Park Free Road. This crude road was commissioned in 1873 by citizens of Virginia City to promote the town's tourist business and followed the Madison and Firehole rivers to the Lower Geyser Basin. In 1880, Yellowstone National Park's second superintendent, Philetus W. Norris relocated the eastern end of the road to an easier route over the Madison Plateau. Although the route of the Virginia City and National Park Free Road remains unrecorded to date, it is still used occasionally by hikers and appears on some modern maps as the Old Fountain Pack Trail.

Within a few years of Virginia City's road venture, a second crude road was built linking the Lower Geyser Basin with Hayden Valley (Figure 3). This was created in August of 1877 to allow passage of Maj. Gen. O. O. Howard's wagons and troops as they pursued Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce through the park. Howard's road followed and improved upon an even older trail which ran from the forks of the Firehole to the Yellowstone River. In 1878–1879, Norris directed his road crews to

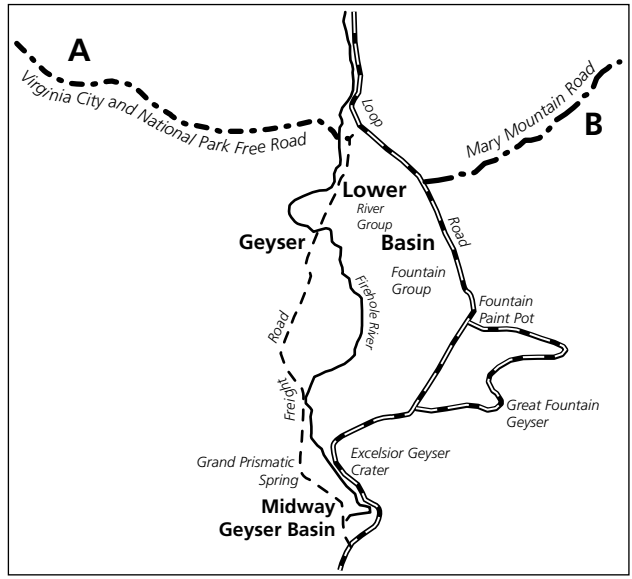

Figure 3. Lower Geyser Basin and surrounding area. The terminus of the Virginia City and National Park Free Road (A) enters the north end of basin from the west. The Mary Mountain Road (B) enters the basin from the east (from U.S.G.S., 7.5' Lower Geyser Basin quadrangle).

upgrade Howard's Road somewhat and, in 1883, the road was further improved by First Lt. Dan C. Kingman of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The route came to be known as the Mary Mountain Road and for twenty years it served as the primary tourist route between the west and central portions of the park. When the Corps of Engineers completed a section of the Loop Road from the Upper Geyser Basin to the West Thumb of Yellowstone Lake in 1891, Mary Mountain Road was virtually abandoned. We recorded the west end of Mary Mountain Road as site 48YE781. It still serves the touring public today as the Mary Mountain (hiking) Trail.

One year after Howard's troops passed through the park, Superintendent Norris built his first road from Mammoth Hot Springs to Nez Perce Creek in the Lower Geyser Basin. Mary Culpin indicates that Norris originally intended to use the park's first appropriation of $10,000 to build facilities at Mammoth Hot Springs. The preceding year's passage of the Nez Perce through the park and a perceived threat of a Bannock Indian uprising caused Norris to change his mind. The purpose of the new road, other than assisting tourists through the park, was to provide a route to allow soldiers from Fort Ellis to move through the park to Henrys Lake in Idaho or Virginia City in Montana. Subsequently, Norris's crew extended the road to the Middle (now Midway) Geyser Basin (Culpin 1994:7, 220).

In 1993, we identified a deeply cut ford across Nez Perce Creek. Comparison of its location with a route depicted on an 1878 revision of Ferdinand Hayden's map (Culpin 1994) suggest the ford was an element of the Norris Road. We recorded the ford and road segments leading from it as site 48YE772 (Figure 4). Historic records in the Yellowstone archives and hundreds of artifacts on the south side of the ford further suggest the locality's use as a camp ground until at least the 1930s. The segment is significant as an element of the first tourist road through the park and because of its association with Norris, a monumental personality in park history.

Figure 4. Norris Road ford across Nez Perce Creek (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

Figure 5. A wagon road probably built by Lt. Dan Kingman in 1885, later incorporated into Chittenden's Loop Road (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

Our survey took us through a portion of the Lower Geyser Basin known as Fountain Flats. We also recorded a faint and very narrow, raised wagon road segment as site 48YE785 (Figure 5). This road first appears on an 1892 Corps of Engineers map. It appears to have been constructed as a shortcut to the Norris Road probably by Lt. Dan Kingman in 1885. Lt. Hiram Chittenden improved this segment as a part of the Grand Loop Road past the Fountain Hotel, a facility opened for business in 1891.

Entering the Lower Geyser Basin from the north, the modern traveler soon encounters a paved road branching off to the right. This road, recorded as site 48YE774 (Figure 6), was also built under the direction of Lt. Kingman in 1885 as an improved route over the winding Norris Road. It considerably shortened travel time to the Upper Geyser Basin and its straight route through flat meadows and woodland earned it the name "Park Avenue." This road served for years as a primary tourist route through the Lower Geyser Basin. With completion of Hiram Chittenden's new road through the Lower Geyser Basin in 1895, tourists tended to by-pass the less scenic road. Freighters continued to use the shorter route, however, to supply the tourist businesses in the Upper and Lower geyser basins. It then became known as the Fountain Flat Freight Road, a name which has stuck to this day. It now serves as

Figure 6. The modern entrance to Fountain Flat Freight Road at the north end of the Lower Geyser Basin, a route more commonly known to 1880s–1890s tourists as "Park Avenue" (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

Figure 7. Wagon road from the Fountain Hotel to hot springs and geysers in the Firehole Lake area (above) and turn-of-the-century travel down a similar Yellowstone road (right) (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

a summer bicycle trail and a winter snow buggy route between the Upper and Lower geyser basins.

While surveying in the southeastern portion of the Lower Geyser Basin, our team of archeologists noted a linear clearing and wagon ruts through the lodgepole pines (Figure 7). Recorded as site 48YE789, the road's general heading suggests it served as a secondary road to take tourists from the Fountain Hotel to hot springs and geysers in the Firehole Lake area. If so, it may be an early version if not the original route of Firehole Lake Drive and would have been in use from some time in the early 1890s through to at least World War I when automobiles were allowed in the park.

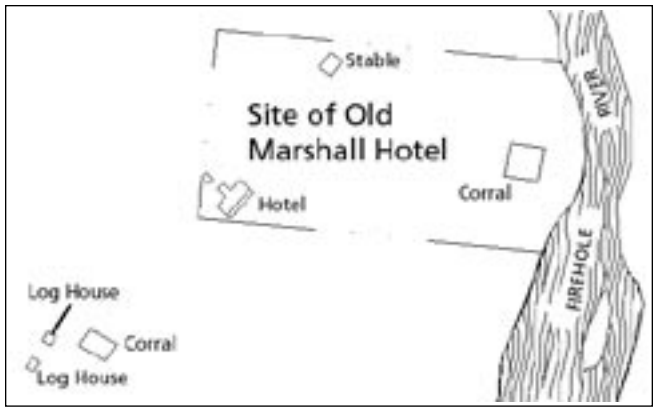

Figure 8. Map of the Marshall Hotel west of Firehole River, 1885 (courtesy Yellowstone National Park Archives).

Hotels and Bathhouses

By the time late-nineteenth-century tourists arrived at the Lower Geyser Basin, they were often exhausted from a hard day's wagon or stage travel over Yellowstone's dusty, rutted roadways. Though tourists had to camp in the basin out of necessity through the 1870s, travelers often desired lodging facilities. Starting in 1880 and continuing through 1917, tourists' desires were addressed with three increasingly elaborate hotel complexes located in areas that, to the uneducated eye, appear to be pristine meadows today.

One of the more significant hotels in Yellowstone history is Marshall's mail station and hotel. Built by George Marshall and his wife in 1880 on the west side of the Firehole River, the Marshall Hotel provided the first commercial lodging in the park interior. Today, only a few depressions mark former locations of the hotel's log buildings and corral. An 1885 map of the area (Figure 8) shows the number of buildings remaining at that site one year after its abandonment. The secluded location of the site has prevented public visitation for the most part and the site is preserved intact. It awaits an archeological crew to formally record it, however.

In 1884, Marshall built a larger hotel on the other side of the Firehole River in partnership with G. G. Henderson. This second Marshall Hotel, a frame structure, was ultimately surrounded by a number of log and frame buildings. Although it was probably as uncomfortable as the original hotel, the new hotel could house seventy-five guests between its canvas walls. In 1885, the complex was purchased by G. G. Henderson and H. Klamer and renamed the Firehole Hotel. A map drawn that year (Figure 9) and an undated photograph of the hotel complex (Figure 10) suggests it may have appeared similar to a small frontier town; a precursor of modern tourist communities in and around Yellowstone today. In 1886, the hotel was sold to the Yellowstone Park Association (YPA) which continued to operate it through 1891. That year, the YPA completed construction of the most luxurious hotel built in the park to that time, the Fountain Hotel. The new hotel was built to replace the crude Marshall-Firehole Hotel and was located a few miles to the south near the Fountain Paint Pots. Though many of the Marshall-Firehole Hotel's log structures were

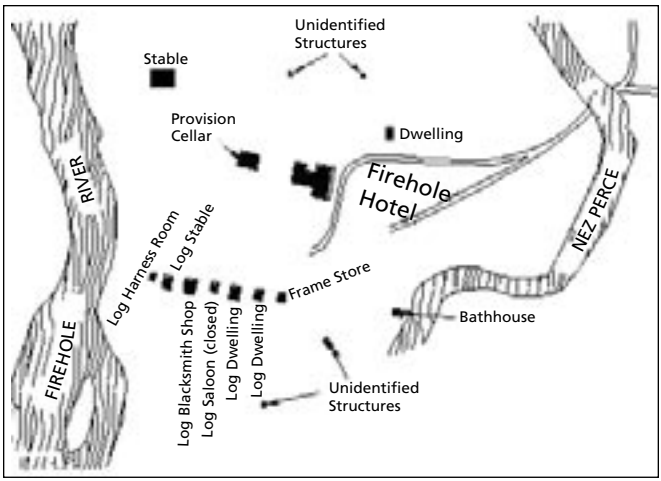

Figure 9. Map in the 1885 plan of the Marshall/ Firehole Hotel east of the Firehole River (courtesy Yellowstone National Park Archives).

removed during the decade that followed, the Army used some of the frame buildings for years afterwards as a part of its Lower Geyser Basin summer encampment.

Today, the archeological elements of the Marshall-Firehole Hotel are almost invisible and, prior to our archeological survey, some had concluded that the site had been destroyed by a large barrow pit and construction of Fountain Flat Drive. Nevertheless, a brief examination of the hotel site revealed historic artifacts both on and below the ground surface across a large flat west of the barrow pit. These included such objects as window and bottle glass, eating utensils and dinnerware (Figure 11), fasteners, cartridges, buttons, and other miscellaneous items. We also noted a number of very shallow depressions which we interpreted as past building locations. We therefore recorded and mapped the site as 48YE773.

Laying the 1885 map on top of our archeological map, we could determine the relationships of the archeological features with the positions of the historical structures. We found the location of the Marshall-Firehole Hotel had certainly been impacted by excavation of the barrow pit although remnants of the west half may still be intact. Further, the greater portion of the rest of the site remains intact as well. One of the three vague surface depressions near the center of the site correlates exactly with the hotel's 1885 provision cellar. Similarly, stone piers and wood joists

Figure 10. Late 1880s view of the Marshall/Firehole Hotel (courtesy Yellowstone National Park Archives).

embedded in the meadow's tall grass proved to be the remnants of the hotel's stable. Brick rubble and a rectangular pit at the edge of Hygeia Spring (Figure 12) mark the position of the bathhouse and its geyserite tub. Our archeological team also noticed concentrations of cut nails and window glass at the south margin of the site. When these objects' positions were plotted on the combined map of archeological historic features, we found they were associated with the hotel's blacksmith shop, saloon, and two log dwellings. There were no remains identified at the position of a log harness room, a log stable, the 1885 bathhouse, and a log house southwest of Hygeia Spring and it is assumed that all remnants of these structures have been destroyed. The barrow pit apparently destroyed the remains of a dwelling as well.

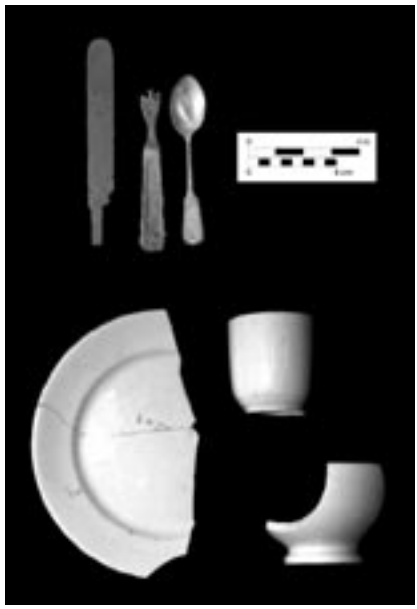

Figure 11. Eating utensils (top) and dinnerware (bottom) from the Marshall/ Firehole Hotel site (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

Although there were a number of correlations between archeological features and structures illustrated on the 1885 map, several archeological features are without counterpart on that map. Among these are depressions of post-1885 structures, corral fence posts, a cold water pipeline, a wooden pipe which carried hot water from Hygeia Spring, and wagon fords across Nez Perce Creek and the Firehole River. We included a well-known historic feature at the site in the documentation; that is the grave of Mattie Culver, wife of Yellowstone Park Association winter caretaker E. C. Culver, who died at the Firehole Hotel in 1888.

Figure 12. Geyserite bathtub at Hygeia Spring, Marshall/Firehole Hotel site (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

One interesting aspect of the archeological project was to demonstrate the role serendipity sometimes plays in this kind of research. It was only by chance that we recovered a clue as to where the hotel site's barrow pit fill had been redeposited. While mapping an old road segment about one mile north of the site, near the south entrance of a small picnic area, one of my crew discovered a broken brass plate at the shoulder of the current highway. This reads "Y.P.A. LOWER GEYSER BASIN HOTEL" (Figure 13). From this discovery, I concluded the road was constructed on the fill from the Marshall-Firehole Hotel site and it is likely that this entire segment of road bed contains many artifacts relating to that structure.

The Fountain Hotel (Figure 14), the last hotel to serve tourists in the Lower Geyser Basin, was built by the YPA north of Fountain Paint Pots in 1890 to replace the Marshall-Firehole Hotel. It opened in time for the 1891 tourist season as the earliest first-class hotel in the park interior. It was a huge building and could accommodate 350 guests. It had its own steam-powered generator, electrical lighting, and steam heat. The Fountain is also notable as the only hotel in the park to ever have natural hot water baths.

Figure 13. Brass plaque from the Y.P.A. (Yellowstone Park Association) Lower Geyser Basin (Marshall/Firehole) Hotel (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

We recorded the Fountain Hotel site as 48YE786 (Figure 15). In contrast to the Marshall-Firehole Hotel complex, which encompassed about thirteen acres, the Fountain Hotel site complex extends over at least a square mile. This extensive area incorporates a broad array of cultural features. The main hotel's intact foundations reflect the large size of the two-story hotel structure which incorporated the steam engine room,

Figure 14. Haynes postcard of the Fountain Hotel (courtesy Yellowstone National Park Archives).

Figure 15. A Midwest Archeological Center crewmember recording one of Fountain Hotel's surviving foundations (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

laundry building, and a one-story ice house. Aside from the hotel foundations, we also identified the remains of nine smaller structures, concrete piers for a 1916 water tank (Figure 16), two cold water pipelines, hot water pipes of metal and of wood to nearby Gentian and Leather Hot Springs, a footbridge, segments of two historic roads, and numerous dumpsites. Among the trees and grasslands of the site were concentrations of brick, parts of the hotel's steam engine, dinnerware, etched window glass, bottle glass, and elements related to construction, lighting, furniture, and door decorations.

With construction of Old Faithful Inn in 1903, the hotel's popularity waned somewhat. It wasn't until 1917 when the recently created National Park Service reorganized park concessions (two years after automobiles entered the park) that the Fountain Hotel was closed. Nevertheless, the pile continued to stand as an empty shell until it was razed in 1927.

Although the hotels in the Lower Geyser Basin included bathhouses as part of their amenities, an attempt to provide bathhouses for the public was made about the time the first hotel in the basin was built. One of the most significant sites in the park, Queen's Laundry Bathhouse, was recorded at the west margin of the basin as 48YE8 by a group of archeologists on holiday in 1988. Remnants of this small log building (Figure 17) are located at the hot springs of the same name. Construction of this structure was initiated in 1881 by Superintendent Norris to serve as a public bathhouse. It thus has the dubious distinction of being the first building in the park to be constructed using public funds. The bathhouse was never completed, however, as Norris was removed from his superintendency for political reasons. It has nevertheless continued to stand for almost 125 years as a monument to Norris, the logs used in its construction preserved by hot spring minerals.

Camping and Campgrounds

FINALLY, THERE ARE TWO SIGNIFICANT TOURIST CAMPS in the Lower Geyser Basin. While their locations are known, they have not yet been recorded as archeological sites. The earliest is the Cowan party campsite. This is one of a handful of such sites in the park

Figure 16. Concrete supports for the Fountain Hotel's water tower (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

Figure 17. Queen's Laundry Bathhouse, built by Superintendent Norris in 1881 (NPS-Midwest Archeological Center Archives).

whose locations are known with certainty and they reflect the rough conditions the first park tourists had to face. Despite this, the site has a more important historic significance for it is the location marking a compelling 1877 drama of frontier tourists in conflict with Nez Perce warriors. That year, Chief Joseph's band of Nez Perce fled westward from their homeland in Oregon in a desperate bid for Canada and freedom. They passed through Yellowstone on the way, entering from the west and exiting to the east, in a two-week visit that created quite a bit of excitement for the park's tourists. After encountering the George Cowan party in the south end of the Lower Geyser Basin on August 24, the Nez Perce took the campers prisoner. Although two of the party were shot and wounded, they later recovered from their wounds. The remaining tourists were released shortly thereafter.

The Cowan party campsite has never been formally recorded. Nevertheless, the late park historian and ranger Aubrey Haines is credited with locating this site in a point of trees near the Firehole River. He staked the site of the camp in 1962 as based on the substantiation of Jack Ellis Haynes, who had been present in 1902 when the Cowans identified the site for Hiram Chittenden. Haines marked the site on the copy of Hague, *Atlas,* Geology Sheet XX, in the Yellowstone National Park Research Library, Mammoth, Wyoming (Green 2000).

Figure 18. One of Shaw and Powell Camping Company's tent camps (Yellowstone National Park Archives).

A later campsite reflects more congenial camping conditions which were available to tourists in Yellowstone after the turn of the century. In 1893, William Wallace Wylie established the first camping company. The goal of the Wylie Camping Company and similar companies that followed was to provide visitors of lower and medium income with low-cost package tours through the park. Lodging was in the form of tent camps established at more-or-less permanent locations along the tour routes. One of Wylie's successors was the Shaw and Powell Camping Company. Established in 1913, Shaw and Powell operated until 1916 when camping concessions were merged. One of Shaw and Powell's five permanent camps was located on Nez Perce Creek east of the Nez Perce Bridge (Figure 18). Though it remains unrecorded to date, company records in the Yellowstone National Park Archives at Mammoth indicate the Nez Perce Camp minimally contained a log building housing a kitchen, dining room, and social assembly hall; roads; rows of sleeping tents; as well as corrals and stables. It is likely that outhouses and small artifact dumps occur as well.

Conclusions

In sum, the Lower Geyser Basin is an area rich with the past. For almost fifty years, it was literally the center of the tourist experience and, as such, served the traveler and growing Yellowstone tourist industry in many ways. My archeological crews surveyed only a small portion of the Lower Geyser Basin but found a wealth of physical evidence for early Yellowstone tourism. When data from these sites are combined with information from historical documents, we find that many historic sites in the basin reflect an era of rapid change from 1872 through 1917. Change brought a diversity of tourist experience through this time. For early visitors, travel through the park involved hardship and sometimes danger. Later tourists could take advantage of hotels and prepared meals after a hot and dusty day's journey. In many ways the tourist experience of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was far different from most visitors' experience today. Inevitably, however, the trip was made worthwhile then as now by the wondrous majesty of nature at Yellowstone National Park.

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The National Park as Museological Space

Thomas Patin

"Nature's Masterpiece" from Wonderland, *1903 (Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries, negative number 18562).*

In the early nineteenth century, American cultural elites were in the habit of comparing American culture to European culture. They felt an "embarrassment" of a comparative lack of a national cultural identity based on a long and established artistic, architectural, and literary heritage.[1] Nevertheless, it was obvious that what America lacked in cultural treasures it more than made up for in natural wonders. A perceived missing national tradition found a substitute in the American landscape. By the middle of the nineteenth century, cultural nationalists took pride in the fact that the western environment, especially places like Yosemite, Yellowstone, and the Grand Canyon in Arizona, were unparalleled. Scenery began to be understood as a form of cultural redemption (see photo at left).[2]

But this redemption could only be accomplished if parts of the natural world could be converted into cultural heritage. How was such a conversion possible? Only figuratively, of course. This conversion has been carried out through the use of a number of extraordinarily effective rhetorical devices. These devices have been so effective that they have become invisible. I am thinking here especially of conventions of landscape painting and techniques of museum display that allowed for the natural world to be presented as a natural culture. My primary concern is with the various techniques borrowed from museums and used again in the presentation of nature in the national parks. Using Yellowstone as an example, I want to suggest that national parks are essentially museological institutions, not because they preserve and conserve, but because they employ many of the techniques of display, exhibition, and presentation that have been used by museums to regulate the bodies and organize

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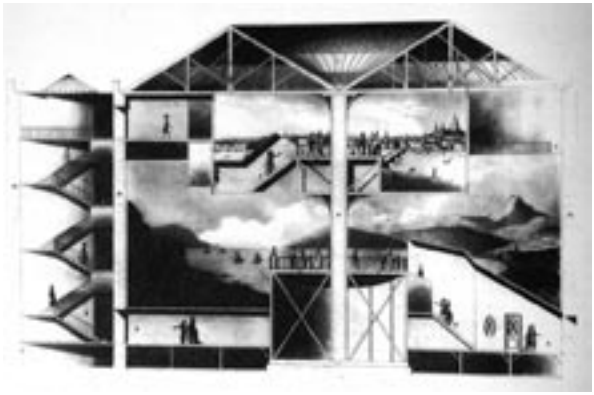
the vision of visitors. Such a strategy produces a so-called "vignette of America," insinuates the museum into the wilderness, produces specific understandings of the natural world, and furthers the idea that natural wonders are part of America's *cultural* heritage.[3]

When F. V. Hayden returned from his expedition to the Yellowstone region in 1871, he arranged for an exhibition of a number of specimens at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. These "specimens" included photographs by William Henry Jackson and sketches by Thomas Moran. These images are more than decoration or pretty scenery. They are more like samples of a nation's heritage. In the same way, the geological specimens on exhibit were more than rocks. In the Smithsonian, the nation's curiosity cabinet, the watercolor sketches, photographs, and geological specimens worked in a supportive interrelationship. Natural fact was claimed as cultural heritage through the aesthetic conventions bound up in landscape painting and in the exhibition of geological samples. At the same time, culturally specific aesthetic preferences were presented as natural fact, since the exhibition and depictions of the natural world seemed to echo art and culture.

Of course, nature cannot be enclosed within a museum, no matter how many rocks, photographs, and paintings are used to represent it. It is possible, though, to enclose nature—so to speak—within the logic of the museum by presenting nature through conventional exhibition techniques. In other words, if you can't bring nature into the museum, bring the museum into nature. There are many general similarities between the ways that museums and galleries present their objects of display and the ways the parks present nature to visitors. Most museums and national parks have grand or otherwise extraordinary entrances. Both institutions use roads, trails, directional signs, architectural elements, or other means of traffic control. Views and vistas are commonly framed by landscaping or architectural elements. In both parks and museums we find an abundance of signs and text panels explaining the importance of particular items on exhibit. Finally, restaurants and shops are abundant in both places, complete with a selection of reproductions of the contents. Rather than gloss over these similarities, however, I would like to be more historically specific and examine two typical nineteenth-century methods of display, the cyclorama and the moving panorama.

In the cyclorama, viewers stand on a raised circular viewing platform in the center of a circular exhibition space and look at a dimly lit 360-degree landscape painting. These huge paintings are often housed in their own circular buildings. Cycloramas are very similar in principle to



A two-layer panorama, London 1798.

the IMAX theatre we are all familiar with today, except they completely surround the viewer. Cycloramas were once popular forms of entertainment, numbering around 400 in Europe and America in the late 1800s, with visitation numbers between 1872 and 1885 reaching 200,000 per year.[5] Cyclorama exhibits were considered to be extraordinarily realistic, as well as morally instructive.[6] Many visitors to cycloramas have described the sensation of being transported to those places depicted in them, such as Niagara Falls, the Alps, volcanic eruptions, or the Holy Land.

The moving panorama combines the cyclorama with the control of vision used in dioramas, another popular mode of viewing scenes in the mid-nineteenth century. The moving panorama requires viewers to sit as an audience facing one direction as the painted scenery passes before them in the form of a theatrical backdrop stretched between two rolls of canvas.[7] Henry Lewis' *Mammoth Panorama of the Mississippi River*, 1849 was painted on 45,000 square feet of canvas and toured several cities in the East and Midwest. The unrolling of this painting took several hours, and quasi-scientific commentaries, anecdotal material, and piano music accompanied the images.[8] Despite the obvious artificiality, panoramic presentations have been generally held to be completely convincing.[9] In fact, some nineteenth-century visitors reported experiencing dizziness and sea-sickness.[10]

What I would like to suggest is that the cyclorama as an exhibition technique has been insinuated into nature in the form of the overlook, the viewcut, and some visitor centers in the national parks, while the moving panorama has been incorporated into the parks as roadways. One early tourist to the Grand Canyon in Arizona explicitly likened his experience on the south rim to standing in the middle of a cyclorama looking at a well-executed painting of mountains and gorges.[11] In a similar fashion, the windows and "reflectoscopes" at the Indian Watchtower at Desert View, designed by Santa Fe Railroad's architect Mary Colter in 1932, condense, simplify, and separate sections of the canyon for viewing as if they were framed pictures.[12] According to historians Marta Weigle and Kathleen Howard, a controlled access to the rim and the regulation of vision were crucial components of the "viewing apparatus" set into place at Grand Canyon by the Santa Fe Railroad and the Fred Harvey Company.[13]

Tourists at the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, Artist Point overlook. Photos in this article taken by author unless otherwise noted.

In Yellowstone, the cycloramic exhibition technique is also found at overlooks, viewing platforms, and viewcuts at roadside turnouts. As early as 1897, platforms and sidings were built for tourists to use to get out of coaches or other vehicles at different points on regularly traveled routes.[14] Starting about 1910, "vista cuts" began to

Top: Thomas Moran's Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone*, 1872 (National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution) and the viewing platform at Tower Fall.*

be made along roads, such as one on the West Thumb to Old Faithful road that allows for a view of Duck Lake, and another east of Mammoth Hot Springs used to view Wraith Falls.[15] The Civilian Conservation Corps continued such work into the 1930s, clearing stumps and dead trees, building more guardrails, and creating more turnouts, viewcuts, and exhibit shelters like the one at Obsidian Cliff.[16] The construction of turnouts and viewcuts along the roadways continued since the late 1950s. There are numerous turnouts and viewcuts in the park, of course, but ones that have historically exemplified the cycloramic function include those at the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, such as Artist Point and Inspiration Point.

Some of the overlooks allow for a nearly 360-degree view of the canyon and its surroundings. The view is an elevated one, allowing for a view of the depths of the canyon, as well as some of the landscape above the rim. There are, of course many other examples in the park.

As a digression, it is interesting to note how the view beheld by visitors to the canyon is similar to that depicted in Thomas Moran's painting of the canyon. Moran even provides two "staffage figures" or "surrogate viewers," which act as stand-ins for the viewers of the picture, allowing viewers an imaginary immediacy and presenting an idea of the scale of the scenery. The overlooks at the canyon explicitly repeat the view depicted by Moran and beheld by his figures. This happens elsewhere in the park, most obviously at Tower Fall. At Tower Fall, the viewing platform is an excellent

Roadside turnout at Shoshone Point, between Old Faithful and West Thumb, near DeLacy picnic area.

example of cycloramic presentation, and there is a reproduction of a Moran painting with two surrogate viewers in it looking at the falls.

There are also numerous roadside turnouts that are examples of both cycloramas and large-format panoramic paintings, such as the one at Shoshone Point, between Old Faithful and West Thumb, near DeLacy picnic area.

It presents the Tetons to the south and the view is framed by trees to either side (the stumps of trees cleared for the view are visible if you look for them.) It is obvious from the design of the parking lot and the arched rock wall where the view is best appreciated, and, if viewers stand in the prescribed spot, they are offered a framed view of natural beauty as if in a picture painted from an elevated point. The point of view made available from such a design produces what art historian Albert Boime has described as the "magisterial gaze." To Boime, this viewpoint embodies the exaltation of the nineteenth-century American cultural elite before an unlimited horizon that they identified with the "manifest destiny" of the American nation.[17] In the parks, the magisterial gaze is reenacted millions of times each year. The elevated position of the park visitor allows for a commanding view of the land, a land that—once seen, claimed, and surveyed—can become part of a nation's heritage.

The convention of the cyclorama continues to be implemented in national park construction, especially in visitor centers and viewing platforms. In addition to an actual cyclorama painting installed in its own building at Gettysburg, there is a viewing tower at Clingman's Dome in Great Smoky Mountains National Park that presents a completely cycloramic viewing opportunity. My own favorite example of an explicitly cycloramic presentation is atop the Mission 66-era Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center at Mount Rainier National Park. In a large, circular viewing room, a 360-degree view of dramatic mountainous scenery is provided. The room includes benches, handrails, viewing scopes, and information panels. Some items in the scenery are nearby, such as some small trees, rocks, and shrubs, and in some instances frame the view and help to break up the seemingly unlimited view into smaller segments. These smaller and more immediate objects also serve to set the remainder of the scenery into a spatial relationship with the viewers and the visitor center.

The moving panorama has been repeated in Yellowstone and in most of the national parks in the form of the road system. In the early years of Yellowstone tourism,

the Northern Pacific Railroad (NPRR) suggested in their promotion literature a sequence for park visitors: Mammoth, Obsidian Cliff, Norris Geyser Basin, Gibbon Canyon, Gibbon Falls, Lower and Upper geyser basins, Yellowstone Lake, and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone.[18] Businessman Nathaniel Langford also proposed roads in the figure-eight system similar to the Northern Pacific Railroad scheme and similar to what we now have in the park. Early park superintendent Philetus Norris was concerned with providing visitors with scenic and interesting views along the roads of the park and built the road around the base of Bunsen Peak to provide views of Gardner Canyon.[19] I don't want to suggest that building a kind of moving panorama was the explicit intention of early park promoters and administrators, only that the moving panorama and the road system performed similar functions: to make available to visitors, or viewers, a sequential presentation of designated wonders and natural beauty.

Since the 1950s, however, the project of exhibiting natural wonders has been more explicit. In 1958, National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth issued his *Handbook of Standards for National Park and Parkway Roads*, in which he stated that the purpose of roads in the national park system was "to give the public…leisurely access to scenic and other features. Thus [the roads] become principal facilities for presenting and interpreting the inspiration values of a park.…"[21] Wirth also instructed that roads be fitted to the terrain, and that shoulder widths allow for turnouts and overlooks at frequent intervals. The current systemwide road rebuilding program provides an opportunity to explore a more self-conscious implementation of exhibition techniques in the park.

The cyclorama has been reconstituted in the form of turnouts, viewcuts, observation platforms, and visitor centers, while the moving panorama has been repeated in the parks as roads. To a greater or lesser extent, these techniques have had the effect of regulating the vision of park visitors and managing their physical relationship to natural wonders. Park visitors have been put into positions not unlike visitors to museums and galleries exhibiting art and other objects. These techniques, along with many other important conventions, have been, in my opinion, crucial to the successful conversion of natural wonders into cultural heritage. This is constantly suggested in the repeated references to national parks and wilderness areas as "treasures" and as our "national heritage," terms more commonly used for works of art in museums.

Sign along road near Lake Yellowstone.

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Architecture of Yellowstone: A Microcosm of American Design

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The idea of Yellowstone National Park—the preservation of exotic wilderness—was a noble experiment in 1872. Preserving nature and then interpreting it to the park visitors over the last 125 years has manifested itself in many management strategies. The few employees hired by the Department of the Interior, then the U.S. Army cavalrymen, and, after 1916, the rangers of the National Park Service needed shelter; hence, the need for architecture. Whether for the purpose of administration, employee housing, maintenance, or visitor accommodation, the architecture of Yellowstone has proven that construction in the wilderness can be as exotic as the landscape itself and as varied as the whims of those in charge. Indeed, the architecture of America's first national park continues to be as experimental as the park idea.

Many factors contributed to Yellowstone's search for an architectural theme. In 1872, the park was remote and the choice of building materials was generally limited to using what was readily available—logs. James McCartney, who was encamped in the park just prior to its designation, built his earliest visitor accommodation, McCartney's Hotel, in the true pioneer spirit. This structure was soon equaled by the construction of Philetus Norris' so-called "blockhouse," built atop Capitol Hill in 1878 when it became painfully obvious that a governmental presence was needed to match that of the first concessioner and also to handle vandals and poachers in the new park. Designed to serve as a lookout point from which the park administration could protect itself from the (real or imagined) threat of attack by local American Indian tribes, it is no coincidence that the blockhouse was built on the highest point of ground above the Mammoth Terraces, and that it had a pioneer defensiveness design. Norris's struggle to manage the park

The burled logs of Old Faithful's Lower Hamilton Store epitomize the Stick style. NPS photo.

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during this era led directly to the U.S. Army taking over management to battle the insurgents and usurpers of park lands. The army's effort began from the newly established Camp Sheridan, constructed below Capitol Hill at the base of the lower terraces at Mammoth Hot Springs.

Beyond management difficulties, the search for an architectural style had begun. The Northern Pacific Railroad, which spanned Montana, reached Cinnabar with a spur line by September 1883. The direct result of this event was the introduction of new architectural styles to Yellowstone National Park. The park's pioneer era faded with the advent of the Queen Anne style that had rapidly reached its zenith in Montana mining communities such as Helena and Butte. In Yellowstone the style spread throughout the park and found its culmination in the National Hotel, constructed in 1882 and 1883 at Mammoth. The Queen Anne style, often co-mingled with the Eastlake style, also manifested itself in an early version of the Lake Hotel in 1889. It used strips of wood for decorative purposes, and is also seen in the much later Tower Junction residence, originally built in 1926 as a road camp dormitory. At Fort Yellowstone, the successor to Camp Sheridan, the U.S. Army also was experimenting with the Queen Anne style in the development of new structures such as the Officers' Row duplexes. Here the style is characterized less by an animated and turreted skyline than by steeply pitched roofs and eyebrow dormer windows. The porch bracketing and the steep roof of the now-demolished Haynes House at Mammoth also carried the style into the early twentieth century.

Elsewhere in the country, nearly hand-in-hand with the Queen Anne, the architectural style of the Richardsonian Romanesque symbolized power and dominance through stone masonry. It wasn't until 1903 that this style entered Yellowstone, with the construction of the Roosevelt Arch at the North Entrance to the park. Possibly designed by resident "wonder boy" architect of the park, Robert C. Reamer (of whom we shall soon read more), and by U.S. Engineer Hiram Chittenden, the structure announced the park with an adaptation of a triumphal arch—symbolizing the triumph over the natural environment.

Like the two earlier eclectic styles of the 1880s and 1890s, the aptly named Stick style represented the idea that diagonal bracing can be construed as architectural ornament. One of the earliest forms is the use of burls and gnarled poles and logs for diagonal bracing on the Lower Hamilton Store at Old Faithful. The building, constructed in 1894 and rusticated in the 1920s, represents the epitome of the Stick style masquerading as rustic in an early attempt to blend it with the natural environment. At this early date the park concessioners were searching for an architectural theme that would, in the 1920s and 1930s, be extended into the post-Stick style of vertical and diagonal log applications, such as were seen in the now-demolished Old Faithful Cafeteria and in the surviving Lake Yellowstone fish hatchery structures.

When the structural form is hidden behind shingled surfaces, we have the Shingle style, and Yellowstone boasts one of the most original Shingle style buildings in the United States. The Old Faithful Inn, designed by Robert C. Reamer and constructed during the winter of 1903–1904, took the Shingle style to a new height—nearly 100 feet to the ridge. It wrapped the structure in a veneer of elegant

The Shingle-style Old Faithful Inn combines Adirondack rusticity with Queen Anne animation. NPS photo.

shingle patterns and applied East Coast Adirondacks-style rusticity. In addition, Reamer, while certainly under the influence of the Queen Anne style, provided an animated skyline by cleverly contorting a basically symmetrical building with crazy quilt detailing. Similar emphasis on shingled wall surfaces for a rustic atmosphere is experienced at the Lake Store, begun in 1919. The formality of the octagonal towered structure is barely masked by the use of shingles and a stone masonry fireplace shaft to provide an air of rusticity.

From Pioneer-Rustic to Classic Structures

THE ECLECTICISM OF THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY and early twentieth century was reflected in the search for an appropriate architectural style in the park. Standard American late-nineteenth-century conventions such as have been described thus far could easily be adapted to the rustic wilderness, as was demonstrated by the Old Faithful Inn. However, the architectural design conventions of America after the great World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago also suggested the power of classicism in all of its variant forms, derived from eighteenth century American Georgian architecture. The neo-classicist Colonial Revival was reflected in the remodeling of the Lake Hotel in 1922 and 1923, when three Ionic porticoes were added to the facade. This classicism, complete with its egg-and-dart moldings, clearly expressed the American ideal of subjugation of nature in the style of Greece and Rome, rather than the blending with nature. Reamer, ever the resourceful architect, also designed the new wing for the National Hotel—now the main wing of the Mammoth Hotel—in the Neo-classical style by applying columnar orders to window frames and cornices.

The U.S. Army, taking its cue from the concessioner's structures and responding to the fact that Fort Yellowstone was the second-most-visited military post in the United States, embarked on its own expansion program of upgrading their facilities. Of a pure Colonial Revival Style, the Commissary Building (today called the Canteen, housing offices and a federal credit union), built in 1905, has a templed facade with a major fan-lighted entranceway, all derived from classical detailing. Similar design

inspiration entered into the detailing of the Bachelor Officers' Quarters of 1909 (now the Albright Visitor Center) and the Cavalry Barracks also of 1909 (the current park headquarters building). These stone masonry structures are redolent in their airs of classicism and hence suggest the authority of government.

On a more local scale, and at a more intimate level, the Colonial Cottage, a derivative of the classical style seen in the urbanization of cities across the West, also is well represented in the development of the park's architecture. The U.S. Commissioner's residence (still today occupied by the resident park magistrate) represents an example in stone masonry to match nearby Fort Yellowstone. In the backcountry, the U.S. Army built the Bechler River Soldier Station complex of 1910 in this style. Well beyond the bounds of the central offices, classicism prevailed over the flora and fauna.

Like the rest of the nation, the park lurched forward, searching for an architectural style and exploring any number of Academic styles—those attempting to suggest the triumphs of other civilizations. The U.S. Army, not content with just imitating the architecture of democracy, evidently felt in 1913 that not only was the Gothic style appropriate for a religious edifice, the post chapel, but that it would also help Fort Yellowstone equal its architectural rival, West Point. The chapel set the tone into the early twentieth century for additional architectural stylistic adventures.

Experimenting with International Styles

As early as 1903 the U.S. Engineer's Office, designed by the Minnesota Twin Cities architectural firm Reed and Stemm, was designed in a vaguely Chinese style. Indeed, the upward curve of the green tile roof eaves has caused the building ever since to be referred to as the "Pagoda." Later, Reamer set a French tone with the inclusion of a Mansard roof on the west wing of the Old Faithful Inn in 1927. This provided a decided incongruity on his landmark building. France again entered the Yellowstone scene with the construction in 1939 of the United States Post Office at Mammoth. The French style was tempered only by the inclusion of sculptural elements representing pieces of the local environment (such as the bears that flank the front porch).

The international search for an appropriate style extended to England. With the construction of the half-timbered 1936 Mammoth apartment building, a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project, one can wonder: Was the exposed half timbering meant to be English Rustic? As examples of other early American architecture with European antecedents, one could refer to the William Nichols House at Mammoth (south of the current gas station) as Dutch Colonial with its gambrel roof.

Back to Nature

While America searched for an architectural theme, one style was emerging that lent itself exceptionally well to Yellowstone's environment, simply because nature was the inspiration. The first inkling of nature as a value in architectural design came with

the work of Frank Lloyd Wright. His early works in and around Chicago were referred to as the Prairie style because of their response to the flat, horizontal qualities of the prairie. Wright's masterpiece, the Robie House of 1907, was surely an inspiration for Robert Reamer's Harry Child's residence, built in 1908 at Mammoth. All of the horizontal design elements of a Wrightian structure are evidenced in the Child's residence (also called the Executive House); all that is missing is the prairie. Reamer was so enraptured by this new design inspiration that he employed the Prairie style in the construction of the Canyon Hotel in 1910. The same horizontal design elements spread over the structure as it sprawled up the hillside on the site of the current horse stables. It enclosed magnificent interior spaces that made much use of the geometry of the structural elements spanning enormous spaces. Sadly, the demolition of this building (it was sold for salvage in 1959 but accidentally burned in 1960) is one of the great architectural losses in Yellowstone National Park.

One of the interesting adjuncts of early-twentieth-century architecture which took nature as an inspiration was the Arts and Crafts movement that swept the industrialized world. In Yellowstone, this ideal of handmade or "back-to-nature" is exemplified in the 1908 construction of the Norris Soldier Station, designed by none other than Robert Reamer. Reamer chose the local material, logs, but inventively massed them into a bungalow-like structure that served the Army's backcountry patrol efforts. This bungalow form, an offshoot of the Arts and Crafts style, was also the design inspiration for Reamer's Mammoth Hotel Cottages, built in 1938.

In 1929, Reamer designed the Upper Hamilton Store in the Old Faithful area. This building reflects the ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement, particularly in the elegant handling of the stone masonry piers of the porticoes. It is interesting to speculate on the design origins of this building when the record indicates that a Spanish-style store was originally designed for this site. However, then-Superintendent Horace Albright objected and requested a concrete log building patterned after the Awahnee Hotel in Yosemite, which was designed by Gilbert Stanley Underwood, who had also designed the 1927 stone masonry and log elevations of the Old Faithful Lodge.

The Arts and Crafts movement is reflected in the logs and stone masonry of Old Faithful's Upper Hamilton Store. NPS photo.

The Arts and Crafts style of the concessioner buildings was further enhanced with the introduction of another residence at Mammoth in 1927 that utilized shingles and heavy timbers. Simultaneously, the National Park Service was beginning to realize that there just might be a theme drifting in the wind when Dan Hull designed the 1922 community building at Lake Yellowstone. This octagonal log structure with its projecting wings not only pushed the envelope in environmental design, but also offered an interesting beginning to the idea of interpretation in the park by attracting the visitors to fireside chats around the central fireplace. This idea of rustic buildings for a national park had been akindle for several years when the National Park Service designed, in 1923, a standard log ranger station that was to find its way to several parks, including Yellowstone at the Fishing Bridge area. It represented the style of Neo-Rustic Revival, which was based on the concept of hearth and home.

The Rise of "Parkitecture"

ALL OF THESE NEW RUSTIC IDEAS were combined in the works of Herbert Maier, who designed four museums that were financed by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Foundation. In addition to providing interpretation at key locations, the museums, three of which remain, launched the style which is now referred to as "Parkitecture." Maier's brilliant Norris Museum, which serves as the gateway to the Porcelain Geyser Basin, set the pace in the use of stone masonry and log construction. Built in 1929, this museum helped define the park service's six principles of what rustic buildings should be in a rustic environment.[1] One principle is that buildings should be in harmony with the natural surroundings and should be secondary to the landscape rather than primary, as in a city or town. Two, all buildings in any one area should be in harmony—that is, similar materials should be used in the design, roof slopes should be about the same, and type of roof should be similar. Three, horizontal lines should predominate in National Park Service buildings, rather that vertical, which is found more in cities. Maier's design for the Madison Museum, also built in 1929, reflects principle number four: it is advisable to avoid rigid, straight lines when possible, creating the feeling that the work was executed by pioneer craftsmen. This

The Norris Museum exemplifies "Parkitecture," and helped define ideals of rusticity in the national parks. NPS photo.

applies to log ends, ironwork, hardware, and other design aspects. The construction of Lake Museum near Fishing Bridge in 1930–31 exemplified the fifth principle: stone work, log work, and heavy timber work should be in scale, providing a well-balanced design. And, six, in some cases it is necessary to make the stone work and log work a little oversize so that large rock outcroppings and large trees do not dwarf the buildings, giving the impression of underscale.

Maier's designs set the tone for the 1930s decade of the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Notable examples in Yellowstone emulated the six principles in design and provided the introduction of a unifying theme beyond park headquarters at Mammoth. By 1931, interpretation of various sites along the Grand Loop Road were supported by elegant kiosks such as the one that still exists at Obsidian Cliff. Ranger stations, including the 1922 structure at West Yellowstone, used locally obtained materials (logs) to integrate buildings with their surroundings. Structures such as the Northeast Entrance Station, designed by the National Park Service Branch of Plans and Design in 1935, eloquently evoked a sense of entry into a special natural area. The log work of this structure was equaled in a master stroke by the buttressed crowning of the adjacent residence, built in 1936. Carefully chisel-pointed as a suggestion of pioneer work, the projecting crowns sweep to the roof eaves. Logs can have elegance, too.

Going Modern

While the Arts and Crafts style flourished and mellowed into Parkitecture away from headquarters, new buildings, at Mammoth in particular, got a new look. Modernism arrived direct from the centers of Art Deco and Art Moderne, particularly where there was a ready access to terracotta, which lent itself easily to the use of fluting, chevrons, and geometric shapes. Everything was soon "up-to-date" at Mammoth with the reconstruction of the fire-damaged hulk of the old National Hotel. The remains of the hotel were redesigned in the Art Deco style in 1936 by the Yellowstone master of all styles, Robert C. Reamer. Reamer clad the hotel structure in stucco, fluted columns, and cast-composition rosette blocks. The new style was fully expressed by foliate iron work.

At Gardiner, near the North Entrance to the park, the concessioner built warehouses in an adaptation of the Art Moderne style, a streamlined version of Art Deco. The warehouses, designed by Link and Haire of Helena, Montana, expressed the solidity of the style in concrete. Conversely, the Moderne style is represented in frame construction at the 1928–29 Haynes headquarters building (today's Hamilton Nature Store) at Mammoth, designed by Fred Willson of Bozeman, Montana. Here, planes of shingling without ornament echoed the new styles of modernism. This was in stark contrast to the development of rustic buildings in the heart of the park that were the glory of the WPA-CCC days, all of which came to an end with the advent of World War II.

The war years halted construction throughout the nation. Yellowstone was no exception; gasoline was rationed, the hotels closed until the end of war, trains were commandeered for military rather than passenger use, and the overall effect was a

The Canyon Visitor Center was built in the Modern style during the Mission 66 period. NPS photo.

decline in tourism and maintenance. Even after the war, interest in reopening the facilities lagged.

The rise of a new touring public prompted some refurbishing by 1950, but mostly it demonstrated how woefully inadequate the park facilities were to meet travelers' needs. Visitors had changed in the interim. They drove their own cars, demanded more interpretation of resources, and sought better accommodations. Yellowstone, like most of the national parks, was ill-prepared for the second half of the twentieth century. To meet the needs of a new public, the Mission 66 program for new construction was initiated in 1956 to remedy deficiencies in park facilities by 1966. The new program was unabashedly responsive to modernism in order to "fast track" the massive construction effort.

In Yellowstone this new modernism led directly to the construction of developed areas such as at Bridge Bay which, in a modern sense, took on a contemporary look of a fishing village. The visitor center at Canyon employed slump block as a new, vaguely rustic building material that defined a stylistic progression to a watered-down version of the Miesian style based on the ideas of architect Mies van der Rohe. A new visitor center replaced Herbert Maier's old Rustic-style visitor center at Old Faithful. Its Expressionistic-style roof structure floats over a Formalist-style facade. In an effort

Postmodernism came to Yellowstone with the Grant Village development (dining room pictured). NPS photo.

to blend tortured modernism into a compatible whole, the architect clad the surfaces with shingles in homage to Old Faithful Inn and produced a building caught in a time warp. The struggle for a new park style continued through the Mission 66 building boom only to go dormant when the money ran out by the end of the 1960s.

By the mid-1970s the park's older hotels were derelict and the situation launched a new era of upgrading the facilities. A new park architecture emerged that set the stage for a few early attempts at design compatibility, though some now seem heavy handed, such as the boldly expressed modern style stair towers on the Old Faithful Inn. Perhaps one can now view these as a Deconstructionist style when viewed in contrast to the earlier structure. The search for a compatible modern style spilled over into the design of the modular Mammoth dormitory adjacent to Mammoth Hotel. Here the modern style is masked by gabled roofs and rough-sawn siding used to "relate" a large sprawling building to a park environment.

Subsequently, the Post-Modern style moved into the park through the architecture of Spenser and Associates of Palo Alto, California, with the design of new visitor facilities at Grant Village. The dining room building is characterized by a massive roof, multi-mullioned windows, and shingling. The registration building was designed in a more sculptural form, but the architects continued to masquerade the buildings as traditional rustic with the use of shingle cladding. An idea of natural buildings in a natural environment was once again in the germinating stage. These buildings are grand statements in the Yellowstone search for a style, but unfortunately fell short in unifying the building collection of Grant Village.

Back to the Future

THE PARK AND ITS CONCESSIONERS' STRUGGLES for architectural identity focused on marketing their own history. As a consequence, since the early 1980s, the park hotel facilities have been and are being rehabilitated following the trends of the country, incorporating input from the National Park Service, its concessioner partners, and independently contracted cultural resource professionals and architects. This rehabilitation movement has given rise to the last architectural style of the twentieth century: Neo-Traditionalist—the mark of the 1990s. The park service has followed

The new Old Faithful Snow Lodge is typical of 1990s neo-traditionalism. NPS photo.

suit and taken a further step with the construction of new log buildings at various areas in the park to capture a style of Neo-Rustic Revival. Buildings such as the South Entrance Ranger Station exemplify this trend of attempting to recapture a unique park experience. At strategic points, park management has made a statement that Yellowstone is a special place with special architecture. This idea is best illustrated by the construction of the new Old Faithful Snow Lodge, designed by A & E Architects of Billings, Montana. In combining the best of Old Faithful Inn and Old Faithful Lodge, the architects have clearly expressed the idea that any new building in Yellowstone should be subordinate to its historic neighbors, as infill within a historic district. The new Snow Lodge stands out in this context, yet is surely to someday join the ranks of its exalted neighbors as a National Historic Landmark.

The Snow Lodge demonstrates that the twentieth century struggle for a Yellowstone style has been brought to a conclusion. There is no one park style but, like America as a whole, the richness of the fabric that characterizes the architecture at once unites the park with the rest of the country and also makes it a very special place.

Notes

1. Thomas C. Vint, "Report on the Building Program from Allotments of the Public Works Administration," National Park Service Western Division, 1933–1937, compiled by Edward A. Nickel, pp. 12–13.

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